

The copy of the queenes highnes cōmission.

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LIZABETH by the grace of God, Queene of Englande, Fraunce, and Irelande, defender of the faith. &c. To our trustie & welbeloued A. B. C. D. and to euery of you, greeting. Whereas in the Parliament holden at westminster, in the. xxxiii. yeere of the raigne of our late deare father of woorthy memory kyng Henry the eyght, one acte or statute was then and there made, for the mayntenance of Artillerie, and debarring of vnlawful games. By the whiche good statute, amongst many other thynges, it was prouided, that the fathers, Gouernours, and Maisters of the youth of this our Realme, shoulde in diuers and sundry sortes trayne and bring by theyr

youth in shooting in the long bowe, and shoulde haue for that purpose seuerall bowes and arrowes, in number and quantitie accordyng to theyr ages and yeeres, vpon suche payne and penaltie as is expessed in the sayde statute, as by the same statute more at large it doth and may appeare. And being geuen to vnderstand, that for lacke of due searche whether euery person and persons haue bowe and arrowes, accordyng to the tenour of the sayd acte, the commendable exercise & vse of shooting, and the rest of the good deuises and prouisions conteyned in the sayde statute, is therefore in the most partes of this our Realme utterly forgotten, and not accomplished. And to thentent that shooting may be vsed and exercised within this our Realme as in tymes past, and vnlawful games suppressed and put out of vse, we haue thought it conuenient for good consyderations by specially mouyng, to nominate, assigne, and appoynt you to be our Commissioners, geuyng vnto you and euery of you, and to al other officers aucthorised by the sayde statute, full power and aucthoritie by vertue of these presentes, in our name, not only from tyme to tyme as often as neede shal require, to make due and lawful searche in euery place within our Countie of S. aswel within liberties as without, aswel for suche as vse vnlawful games, as also for suche as kepe houses or alleys for vnlawful games: but also whether euery person for hym selfe, his seruantes, and other youth in his or theyr seuerall houses, haue sufficient furniture and prouision of bowe and arrowes, and haue and do vse and occupie the same, accordyng to the true meanyng of the sayde statute.

And to thend the same may be the better vnderstanded and knowen, our pleasure and commaundement is, that al suche bowes and arrowes that euery person ought to haue by the order of the sayde statute, ye shal cause the parties to bring to some conuenient place or places, within the parish where such parties dwell, by the discretion of you our sayd Commissioners, or any of you, there to be viewed and seene by you our sayd Commissioners, or any of you. vpon whiche searche, viewe, and examination, if you or any of you our said Commissioners, or any other our officer abovesayde, shal finde any person or persons, eyther not furnished with bowe and arrowes, or not bring the same, as by the sayd statute is limited and appoynted, or any person or persons bring vnlawful games, or keepyng houses or alleys for vnlawful games, contrary to the meanyng of the sayde statute: that then our pleasure is, that you our sayde Commissioners, and euery of you, by gentle admonition shal do your good endeour to cause a reformation to be had therein, that the exercise of shooting may be vsed and continued by as many of our good subiectes of euery estate, as can or may vse the same. And if you can not by gentle admonition and order, cause the offendours to reforme themselves in the premises: then our pleasure is also that you, or any two of you, shal cause the names and dwelling places of suche offendours to be noted and certified vnto the Lorde Chauncelour, or Lorde keeper of the great seale of Englande for the tyme being, to thintent we may cause suche order and direction to be taken and had therein, as by the lawes and statutes of this our Realme is prouided in that behalfe. wherefore we wyl and commaunde al and singuler our officers, ministers, and subiectes of our sayde Countie, aswel within the liberties, as without, that they and euery of them be apdyng, helpyng, and assisying you our said Commissioners, and euery of you, in the due execution of this our Commission, as they and euery of them tender our pleasure, and wyl answer for the contrary at theyr perils. In witness whereof. &c. witnessse our selfe. &c.

God saue the Queene.

Imprinted at London in Powles

*Churchyarde, by Richarde Iugge, printer to the
Queenes Maiestie.*

Cum priuilegio Regie Maiestatis.